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Kin-Buc pit collapse blamed for oil spills

EDISON — Two large oil spills in Edison this year — totaling more than 102,000 gallons — occurred when pits at the Kin-Buc dump collapsed, a federal spokesman said yesterday.

The first spill, in which 100,000 gallons of oil leached into the Raritan River by way of creeks and ditches behind the landfill, took place on Jan. 16, Environmental Protection Agency official Mike Polito said.

The second spill on April 30 dumped 2,000 gallons of oil into the river through Mill Brook, he added.

The grand total of 102,000 gallons makes Edison the second-worst oil spill area in the New York Harbor vicinity this year, according to statistics released by the Coast Guard this week. The only city that tops Edison is Brooklyn, where a 2.5 million gallon spill occurred during an explosion and fire at the Bushy Terminals in January.

The Kin-Buc landfill, which has been making daily headlines this summer, is now only allowed to accept solid waste from industry. It is the only dump in the state that may take hazardous industrial wastes, and had been accepting 60 million gallons of liquid chemical wastes per year.

The landfill operation may be closed down, depending on the outcome of a hearing now being conducted by the state De-

partment of Environmental Protection and the Board of Public Utility. The hearing has been adjourned until September, when air, water and land pollution charges will be heard.

Yesterday, the federal environmental expert (who is based in Edison) said the January oil spill is what got the action against Kin-Buc started.

"I received a call about an oil spill damaging wildlife around the marsh area," Polito said. "We went out to investigate and found that the side walls of oil pits in the landfill had collapsed." Thousands of gallons of oil had poured out, he said.

There's really no way to estimate the overall extent of the spill, Polito added. The total tally of 102,000 gallons he came up with is just the amount that reached the river, the EPA inspector said. Much more may remain in ditches, creeks and other underground tributaries.

"When these materials leach out, we can't always find the actual route," he explained.

After the January spill, the EPA official said, he started looking into the total Kin-Buc operation. "We looked at their other permits and this got the state involved," he said.

Polito said he did a chemical laboratory analysis of the January and April spills to make sure they were oil.

Mill-Buc closing asked of Byrne

8/13/76

By NANCY CHERRY
News Tribune staff writer

EDISON — A concerted and impassioned letter-writing campaign, aimed at securing Gov. Brendan Byrne's signature on a bill to regulate disposal of chemical wastes, was urged last night at a meeting of the Citizens Committee to Close Kin-Buc.

The legislation which is currently awaiting Byrne's approval is Senate Bill 1493. Sponsored by Sen. Bernard Dwyer and Assemblyman John Froude, both D-Middlesex, the proposed law would regulate the disposal of hazardous and chemical wastes, bulk liquids and pesticides.

The measure would effectively close the Kin-Buc, Inc., landfill site here on Meadow Road to the dumping of toxic chemical wastes and could halt expansion plans.

"We've got on the governor's desk what we think is a solution," Froude told some 50 persons gathered at the township library on Plainfield Avenue. The meeting was chaired by Councilwoman Dorothy Drwal.

Both the assemblyman and Theodore O'Neill, Middlesex County's Solid Waste Management program administrator, said the bill prohibits, after Jan. 1, any solid waste facility located within 1,000 yards of a flood hazardous area from accepting hazardous chemical or liquid wastes.

Any other facility which accepts such materials must maintain a list of materials received, install monitoring wells and deliver lab analyses of well samples to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) every three months.

In addition, no facility will be permitted to accept such materials after March 1, 1980, unless it has installed a DEP-approved leachate control system.

The Kin-Buc landfill is the largest of its kind in the state and the only one licensed to dispose of hazardous wastes. Located on the lower Raritan River, the site is adjacent to the Farrington Sands aquifer, a ground water source for many municipal

Shortly after the township ordered the landfill gates closed early last month in violation of a recently enacted code which limited the fill area's height at 85-feet, the facility's managers won a stay on the ordinance.

A DEP order revoking the landfill's registration for state statute violation prompted a joint DEP and Public Utilities Commission (PUC) hearing which was recently continued to Sept. 20 in Newark.

O'Neill told the audience, which included many Meadow Road residents, that the Middlesex County Board of Freeholder had directed its counsel to seek prevention of further DEP approvals for Kin-Buc expansion. A \$50,000 contribution was also pledged, he said, for a joint county-industries study on hazardous waste management.

Critical of DEP, O'Neill said the agency's "inaction and inabilities led to the emerging conflict" between Edison and industries. The administrator agreed with both Froude and local resident Frank Burke who commented that DEP's major problem is funding.

A projected \$2 million in collected dumping fees to be received by a proposed statewide solid waste management program could be viewed optimistically and pessimistically, O'Neill said. "For the first time we may have enough money to do a decent solid waste job," he said, but "how much will filter down to the counties remains to be seen."

He was skeptical of the state's potential handling of the program saying "they have not been very effective so far." An advocate of the county planning program he wondered whether his job would involve "fighting tooth and nail" for some of the additional money.

The county, he continued, is currently planning to have some solid waste facility under construction by 1978 with a projected opening in 1980 to 1981. The intent, he stated, is to have 80 per cent of the waste emerge as energy or material after treatment while only 20 per cent would be resi-

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A landfill in Edison